

REMARKS

This Reply to Office Action is responsive to the Office Action mailed May 4, 2006.

Claims 1-5, 17-28, 40-51, 63-67, 94 and 95 are pending in the present application.

Claims 94 and 95 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being clearly anticipated by EP 1,049,226 A (EP '226).

Claims 1-5, 17-19, 22-28, 40-42, 45-51 and 63-65 have been rejected under 35 § U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (APA) in view of EP '226.

Claims 20-21, 43-44 and 66-67 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of EP '226 as applied to claims 1, 22 and 45 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,712,649 issued to *Mano et al.* (the Mano patent).

European Patent Publication No. 1,049,226 A2 is published in a language other than English. As such, Applicants have obtained an English translation of EP '226 to accurately evaluate the pending rejections. A copy of the English translation is enclosed.

EP '226 discloses a device for connecting sections of cable channel. The device includes a connecting part 20 having tabs 22 with a claw 23. The cable channel sections include a number of slots 14. The tabs 22 with the claw 23 of the connecting part 20 are positioned within the slots of the cable channel sections to join adjacent cable channel sections. The claws 23 engage the inside surface of the cable channel sections.

As set forth in paragraph 0009, the "installation of the connecting part establishes a sturdy and positive connection between two adjacent and aligned cable channel sections. It must be ensured, however, that the connecting part remains fixed in position. A locking

part is used to work in connection with the connection part. The locking part serves essentially only to hold the connecting part in position."

FIGS. 5-12 of EP '226 illustrate various locking parts that hold the connecting part 20 in position. FIG. 5 illustrates levers 30a that are pivoted upward so that they engage under the top edge 13 of the cable channel sections and lock the connecting part 20 in place.

FIGS. 6-8 illustrate a connecting part 20e with a slot 26e and a hook 25e. The slot and the hook receive the locking part 30e to hold the connecting part 20e in position. More specifically, as illustrated in FIG. 8, the locking part 30e is positioned through the slot in the connecting part 20e so that a rounded part 31e of the locking part may engage the top edge 13 of the channel section to hold the connecting part 20e in position.

With respect to claim 94, as discussed above, the connecting part 20a in EP '226 establishes a positive and sturdy connection between adjacent cable channel sections. The lever assembly 30a is used to lock the connecting part 20 in position, it is not used to couple the channel sections together. As such, EP '226 does not anticipate claim 94 because it does not disclose a cable duct component comprising a lever assembly for coupling and uncoupling a cable duct section. Applicants submit that claim 94 is allowable over EP '226.

With respect to claim 95, as discussed above, the connecting part 20e in EP '226 establishes a connection between adjacent cable channel sections. The locking part 30e is positioned through the slot in the connecting part 20e and engages a top edge 13 of the channel section to hold the connecting part 20e in position. EP '226 does not disclose a barb that engages the end of the cable channel sections. As such, EP '226 does not anticipate claim 95 because it does not disclose a cable duct component comprising a lever

assembly for engaging and disengaging a barb with an end of a cable duct section. Applicants submit that claim 95 is allowable over EP '226.

With respect to claims 1-5, 17-19, 22-28, 40-42, 45-51 and 63-65, EP '226 fails to disclose a lever assembly that couples and uncouples a cable duct section. As discussed above and as indicated in EP '226, the lever assembly 30 is used only to hold the connecting part 20 in position. As such the lever assembly 30 does not couple adjacent cable channel sections. The adjacent cable channel sections are already coupled before the lever assembly is engaged.

Additionally, EP '226 does not illustrate a barb that engages or disengages an end of the cable channel section or a releasable assembly that moves the barb from an engaged position to a disengaged position. Instead, EP '226 illustrates a connecting part 20 that joins adjacent cable channel sections and a lever assembly 30 that engages the connecting part and the top edge of the cable channel sections to hold the connecting part in position.

As such, the APA and EP '226, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or disclose the invention set forth in independent claims 1, 22 and 45. Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 22 and 45, and the claims that depend therefrom, are allowable over APA combined with EP '226.

With respect to claims 20-21, 43-44 and 66-67, as discussed above, the APA and EP '226 fail to teach or disclose the invention as set forth in independent claims 1, 22 and 45. The Mano patent also fails to illustrate a barb that engages or disengages an end of the cable channel section or a releasable assembly that moves the barb from an engaged position to a disengaged position.

As such, the APA, EP '226 and the Mano patent, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or disclose the invention set forth in claims 20-21, 43-44 and 66-67. Applicants submit that claims 20-21, 43-44 and 66-67 are allowable over APA combined with EP '226 and the Mano patent.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claims are in condition for allowance and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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